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1764

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

First Named

Inventor : Hubertus E.M. Stassen

Appln. No. : 09/446,875

Filed : March 23, 2000

Title : METHOD OF THERMICALLY
TREATING A CARBONACEOUS
MATERIAL-COMPRISING AQUEOUS
FLUID AND AN APPARATUS
THEREFORE

Group Art Unit: 1764

Examiner: Ridley, Basia
Anna

Docket No. : B758.312-0001

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TC 1700

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Commissioner For Patents
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Sir:

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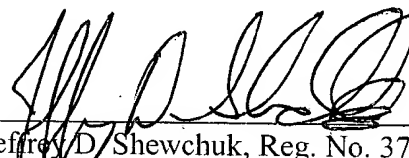
1. Itemized Return Receipt Postcard
2. Response (2 pages)

Respectfully submitted,

KINNEY & LANGE, P.A.

Date: October 17, 2003

By


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RESPONSE

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Sir:

This is in response to an Office Action mailed on September 23, 2003. In that Office Action, the Examiner acknowledged Applicant's previous election of invention II (claims 12-19) and Species C (Figure 3), but stated that such an election was unresponsive because Species C was not encompassed by claims 12-19. The Examiner stated that because "...lack of addition of oxygen comprising gas into the incinerator... (or a second elongated vessel) is a special technical feature of elected Species C, as shown in Fig. 1-3 (sic) and as disclosed in specification P10/L12-19, all claims 12-19 are drawn to a non-elected Species." Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Referring to the place in the specification referred to by the Examiner (page 10, lines 12-19), oxygen is omitted if the **gasification** takes place at a pressure and temperature well above the critical temperature and pressure of water. Hence, the lack of oxygen is not in the incinerator (or the second elongated vessel) as the Examiner proposes, but in the tubular reactor (or first elongated vessel) because that is where the gasification of the aqueous fluid comprising

carbonaceous material takes place. The incinerator (or second elongated vessel) is where combustion of air (containing oxygen) and gas takes place to provide heat to the tubular reactor.

With reference to claim 12, combustion of fuel in the presence of oxygen (usually from the air) is required to generate heat. In Fig. 3, the intake of air is depicted with an arrow (the one pointing towards the heat exchanger indicated with reference numeral 35). The combustion takes place in a chamber of the incinerator 32. The heat generated in this combustion process is used to perform a conversion reaction within tubular reactor 27 in the absence of an oxygen supply. While the elongated reactor 27 is provided within the chamber of the incinerator, the oxygen (air) supplied to the incinerator for the combustion of fuel does not enter the elongated reactor 27, and thus the gasification proceeds without the addition of oxygen.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant believes that elected Species C (Fig. 3) is encompassed by elected Invention II (claims 12-19), and therefore respectfully requests examination on the merits of claims 12-19. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if further explanation of how claim 12 reads on the embodiment of FIG. 3 or if any further information is needed responsive to the September 23, 2003 Office Action.

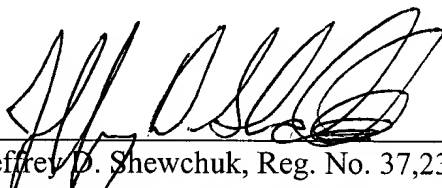
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